

**ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS
SAWTOOTH NATIONAL FOREST
MINIDOKA RANGER DISTRICT
Cold Springs C & H
Grazing Year 2021**

The following letter will document your meeting with Chantel Anderson on February 23, 2021 and will serve as your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the 2021 grazing season on the **Cold Springs C & H Allotment**. The District Ranger must approve, in writing, any changes to this AOI.

The following table displays the permitted numbers and seasons of use for the Cold Springs Allotment:

**Cold Springs C&H
PERMITTED USE**

Allotment	Class	Number	Season
Cold Springs C&H	c/c	348	6/11-9/25
TOTAL	c/c	348	6/11-9/25

For the 2021 grazing season, you are authorized to graze the Cold Springs Allotment as follows:

**Cold Springs C&H
AUTHORIZED USE**

Permittee	Class	Number	Season
Gene Wickel	c/c	111	7/8-9/25
Robert Parke	c/c	215	6/11-9/25
Hitt Ranches LLC	c/c	22	6/11-9/25
TOTAL	c/c	348	6/11-9/25

**Cold Springs C&H
2021 PASTURE ROTATION**

PASTURE	# OF LIVESTOCK	DATE ON	DATE OFF	Total Days
Cold Springs	237	6/11	7/7	27
Cold Springs	348	7/8	7/27	20
Pine Canyon	348	7/28	9/25	59
Kossman-Eyrie	0	REST	REST	0

The grazing system on this allotment is a rest rotation. The dates are approximate and depend on meeting allowable use standards. How soon the maximum allowable use level is reached depends on the number of animals, weather, herding, and other permittee practices. It will be your responsibility to see that your livestock are moved from one unit to the next before maximum allowed use is exceeded. Rotation/removal of livestock will be required if allowable use levels are met before the planned rotation/removal date.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

-For the 2020 and 2021 grazing seasons you must adhere to the Mediated Agreement; if the terms of the Agreement are not met, the District Ranger may immediately issue a new suspension decision. The terms of the Agreement include:

-Have a range rider present on the allotment at least four days per week

- Return livestock found in incorrect pastures to the scheduled pasture within 48 hours.**
- Clean pastures thoroughly and promptly**
- Routinely check fences and gates and make any needed repairs within 48 hours**

-Standards were exceeded in 2018 and 2019 in the Pine Canyon and Kossman-Eyrie pastures. Standards were not monitored due to vacant RMS in 2020. You must diligently manage your cattle to ensure standards are met in all pastures of the Cold Springs allotment during the 2021 grazing season. **If standards are approached, you are required to move your cattle to the next pasture or off the allotment early.** You must ensure that pastures not scheduled for use are thoroughly cleaned of cattle. Frequent riding is needed to keep cattle pushed out of riparian areas and canyon bottoms, where standards are often reached first, and to gather stray cattle from unauthorized pastures within 48 hours.

-Fence maintenance and water development responsibilities have been assigned to individual permittees, your Term Grazing Permits were modified to reflect this. A plan for addressing fence reconstruction over the next several grazing seasons will be developed. **Permittees must complete their assigned maintenance prior to turnout; this will be inspected by Forest Service employees. Permittees who have not maintained fences or water developments to standard will not be authorized to turn out livestock until maintenance is complete. If you turn out livestock prior to verbal authorization from your Rangeland Management Specialist it may result in a Notice of Non-Compliance or Suspension of your Term Grazing Permit.**

COMPLIANCE:

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with Part 1, item 3 and Part 2, Item 8(a). Situations may develop during the grazing season which require changes to these instructions, such as delayed range readiness, early achievement of allowable use standards, unit rotation changes related to wildfire or other problems, or other management needs. **If changing pasture move dates becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with any part of these instructions, contact your Range Specialist to obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.**

With multiple uses on the forest, gates are often left open and livestock stray into the wrong pasture. We realize this is a problem and an inconvenience. However, it is still your responsibility to keep your animals in the proper unit. Livestock found in the wrong units or allotments should be returned immediately to the correct pasture. Routine checks need to be made by you and/or your rider.

Compliance with all terms of your grazing permit is required. These annual operating instructions are not meant to be stand-alone or all inclusive

STANDARDS AND GUIDES:

You are responsible for determining when allowable use has been reached and for moving your cattle to the next unit in your rotation or off the allotment to avoid exceeding the standards. The Forest Service is responsible for monitoring your compliance with allowable use standards. The allowable use standards are listed below. If you need assistance with monitoring use, please contact your Range Specialist.

RIPARIAN SITES: Maximum 45% use of grasses, rushes and sedges or a minimum 4-inch stubble height of hydric greenline species, whichever occurs first.

UPLAND SITES: Early season pastures: 40% use of key species. With slow growth of vegetation, after seed ripe, or late season pastures: 50% use of key species (mountain brome, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, squirreltail).

IMPROVEMENTS:

Range improvements listed in Part Three of your grazing permit must be maintained to a proper functioning condition *before livestock enter the allotment*. The maintenance standards listed in Part Three of your term permit must be followed when maintaining the improvements. As a reminder, if you need to use any mechanized machinery (such as tracked equipment), a written authorization from the District Ranger is required prior to use of that machinery. No ground disturbing activities or new construction should be conducted on the Forest by you or any of your personnel, without approval in writing from the District Ranger. Materials for reconstruction may be provided by the Forest Service as funding allows. **Provision of materials for normal annual maintenance is your responsibility.**

Wildlife escape ramps must be installed in troughs and be in contact with the side of the trough. Contact your Range Specialist to request any wildlife ramps that you need.

PERMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS:

Dead livestock must be moved at least 100 yards from water, roads, campgrounds and trails.

Place salt a minimum of a ¼ mile from water sources and in areas lightly grazed to encourage an even distribution of utilization on the range

Invasive weeds are becoming a serious threat to the welfare of our rangelands. Your assistance is needed to identify new outbreaks of weed populations and to prevent the establishment of weeds on the forest. Pay particular attention to areas where stock are concentrated such as loading/unloading areas, water developments and salting areas. Consistent with the Noxious Weed Free Hay Order, any hay or straw that is brought onto National Forest System lands needs to be State-certified weed free. I am requesting that you be a pro-active partner in the prevention of noxious weeds on your allotment(s). All equipment which is used off of open roads for range improvement maintenance, or other management activities should be free of noxious weeds and their seeds prior to coming onto National Forest System lands.

TRAVEL MANAGEMENT AUTHORIZATION:

This direction serves as guidance for grazing permittees' authorization as it relates to the implementation of Travel Management on the Minidoka Ranger District.

Motor vehicle use is authorized on closed roads and trails (non-system routes) for improvement maintenance purposes only. Activities should be planned to avoid high use periods, such as hunting season and weekends, to reduce conflict with the general public. Motorized access in Seasonal Closure areas is not pre-authorized; permission to access these areas must be obtained from the District Ranger prior to entry. Roads and trails that have been physically closed through ripping, barricading, etc. are not authorized for your use, except in the limited instances where there may be structural improvements that need occasional maintenance.

Motor vehicle use off existing roads and trails (cross-country travel) is not authorized. Cross-country travel may be authorized for project-specific purposes only. The District Ranger must authorize these activities in writing in advance of the specific project. **Per Travel Management direction, livestock may not be gathered or herded cross-country with motorized vehicles. Placement of salt using an ATV/UTV off-road (cross-country) is not authorized.** Violation of this direction may result in a fine and Violation Notice or a Notice of Non-Compliance.

BILLING:

The 2021 grazing fee is \$1.35 per head month. The Forest Service is required to give permittees a minimum of 30 days to pay your grazing fees; please pay your bill by the stated due date. Turnout of livestock prior to confirmation of payment is a violation of Part 2, Clause 3 of your term grazing permit and may result in an additional bill for unauthorized use. **You may make payment in one of three ways:**

- I. Mail your payment to the National Finance Center (NFC) at:
USDA Forest Service
C/O US Bank
P.O. Box 6200-09
Portland, OR 97228-6200

You must include the Bill Number and Payer Code number on your check.

- II. Or, pay your bill online at: WWW.FS.FED.US/BILLPAY. Save your receipt of payment.
- III. Or, pay your bill between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm via check, cash or money order at the Ranger District office.

Contact Courtney Keith, Support Services Supervisor at the Minidoka Ranger District (208)678-0430 if you have questions about paying your bill online.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

As a reminder, requests for personal convenience non-use must be submitted in writing; approval is not automatic, and the authorized officer should discuss the reasons for the non-use request with the permittee. Full or partial personal convenience non-use may be approved by the District Ranger for no more than three consecutive years and not more than four years in any ten-year period.

If you are planning to waive your Term Grazing Permit based on either sale of permitted livestock or base property, please submit this intention in writing, with ample notice, to the District Ranger prior to the transaction.

Actual use and range improvement maintenance forms have been included for you to complete and return at the end of the grazing season. Please use these forms to track your livestock management and range improvement work throughout the grazing season. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns about this grazing season, please call Chantel Anderson at (208)260-2012 or (208)677-8296.

